

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Rhode Island</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Newport</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

<b>1. NAME</b>	
COMMON: <b>✓ Edward King House</b>	
AND/OR HISTORIC: <b>King Villa, Peoples' Library</b>	

<b>2. LOCATION</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>Spring Street at Bowery Street, in Aquidneck Park</b>			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Newport</b>			
STATE <b>Rhode Island</b>	CODE	COUNTY: <b>Newport</b>	CODE

<b>3. CLASSIFICATION</b>			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC			
Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No			
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <b>Senior Citizen Center</b>			

<b>4. OWNER OF PROPERTY</b>	
OWNER'S NAME: <b>City of Newport</b>	
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>City Hall, Broadway</b>	
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Newport</b>	STATE: <b>Rhode Island</b>

<b>5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION</b>	
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: <b>City Hall</b>	
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>Broadway</b>	
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Newport</b>	STATE: <b>Rhode Island</b>

<b>6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS</b>	
TITLE OF SURVEY:	
DATE OF SURVEY:	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:	
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:

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## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Edward King House is a large two-and-one-story brick residence. The structure is flanked by three-story towers of varying height with pyramidal roofs projecting on heavy stone brackets. The design is asymmetrical, on an almost square plan (about 65 feet wide by 70 feet deep). The sharply cut masses of the two front square towers are organized asymmetrically around the two-and-one-half story central entrance loggia, while a lower two-story mass with gabled roof projects from the center of the south side and a three-story square tower projects to the north from near the northeast (rear) corner. Second story balconies with elaborate canopies are massed, as are all the details, in keeping with the monumental scale of the whole composition. The numerous windows are chiefly round-arched, but there are also some of the flat-arched pedimented type.

Andrew Jackson Downing, in his The Architecture of Country Houses (1850), 317-21, described the Edward King House, under the heading of "A Villa in the Italian Style," as follows:

"This beautiful villa, the residence of Edward King, Esq., of Newport, Rhode Island, was constructed in 1845, from the designs of Mr. Upjohn of New York.

"It is one of the most successful specimens of the Italian style in the United States, and unites beauty of form and expression with spacious accommodation, in a manner not often seen, and which is very creditable to Mr. Upjohn.

"The first impression which this villa makes on the mind is, that of its being a gentleman's residence. There is dignity, refinement, and elegance, about all its leading features. It next indicates varied enjoyments, and a life of refined leisure - especially abounding, as it does, with evidences of love of social pleasures.

"In a more strictly architectural sense, the exterior of this villa is worthy of note, for the harmony which pervades it. Notwithstanding the great variety of forms in the windows introduced - a variety which denotes different uses in various apartments - the predominance of the round arch in the majority of the leading apertures, whether in windows, doors, or verandas, restores harmony throughout the whole - while it produces an effect, as regards the details, quite different from that which results from the simplicity of most facades. Both are pleasing, but, to a highly cultivated taste, the satisfaction derived from harmony growing out of variety, is as much greater than that arising from uniformity and simplicity, in architecture as in music, where the first may be illustrated by one of Beethoven's symphonies, and the last by the simple melody of a ballad.

"The sky outline of this villa has the characteristic irregularity of the Italian school of design, and the grouping of the whole is a good study for a young architect who is embarrassed how to treat a large square mass of building, - for the ground plan is nearly square. The chimney-tops and

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

# SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian | ☐ 16th Century | ☐ 18th Century | ☐ 20th Century  
☐ 15th Century | ☐ 17th Century | ☒ 19th Century

## SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1845-47

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |   |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | losophy                                 |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | Architecture                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humon-  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | itarian                                 |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |  |

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designed by Richard Upjohn and erected in 1845-47, the Edward King House is an early, excellent, and little-altered example of a monumentally-scaled and asymmetrically-massed brick residence in the Italian Villa style.

### History

Plans for the Edward King House were prepared by the noted architect Richard Upjohn of New York City and the structure was built in 1845-47. The residence remained in the possession of the King family until 1912, when the house and land were given to the City of Newport for use as a library and public park. The interior of the northeast (rear) section, which once contained the kitchen and pantries, was converted into closed stack space by lining interior walls with cement from first floor to roof and by inserting glass floors. Opened as the People's Library in 1914, the house served this function until October 1968, when a modern library building was completed. The Edward King House has been used since 1968 as a Senior Citizen Center.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Architecture, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Baltimore, 1963), 103.

Antoinette F. Downing and Vincent J. Scalley, The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island (New York, 1967), 123-24, 126, Plate 163.

Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Rhode Island Architecture (Providence, 1939), 49.

John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown, The Architecture of America, A Social and Cultural History (Boston and Toronto, 1961), 99, 170.

Wayne Andrews, Architecture, Ambition and Americans (New York, 1955), 127.

## 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NW	0	'	"		41°	28'	56"	
NE	0	'	"		71°	18'	41"	
SE	0	'	"					
SW	0	'	"					

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **4 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

## 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:	
<b>Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian</b>	
ORGANIZATION	DATE
<b>Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service</b>	<b>7/28/70</b>
STREET AND NUMBER:	
<b>801 19th Street, N. W.</b>	
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE
<b>Washington</b>	<b>D. C.</b>

## 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

## NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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7. Description

Continued

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heavy cornice, all of stone, are in excellent taste, and the arcades and verandas have been introduced subordinately, and yet so as to greatly increase the effect.

"Accommodation. An inspection of the plan of the principal floor will show that this is a villa of the first class. On entering the [center] hall, an arcade, supported by four columns, separates the vestibule or entrance hall from the main hall. In the latter, which is spacious, and lighted by a skylight of colored glass, one is struck by the fine effect of the ample staircase [with symmetrical divided flights], rising by easy flights, with broad landings. On the right [south] of the hall is a fine suite of rooms - parlor, drawing-room and library; on the left are the dining-room, housekeeper's room (with pantries), kitchen, laundry, etc.

"In an entry, at the rear of the main hall, is placed the servants' staircase.

"We have not given the plan of the second floor, but, it will be readily imagined, there is an abundance of sleeping apartments, with rooms for domestics on the third story of the higher [tower] portions of the building.

"Construction. This villa is built, throughout, in a very solid and excellent manner. The walls are of brick, painted externally of a light freestone color [-only traces of this coat of paint remain today], and the window-dressings, string-courses, cornices, brackets, etc., are all freestone. The effect is more real and satisfactory than that of any other mode of building, except it be of solid stone - and that stone one of an agreeable tone of color..."

First floor rooms have high ceilings and parquet floors, the mantels are of marble, and the moldings are simple and heavy. The Edward King House is little-altered and in good condition. The first-floor is used as a Senior Citizen Center and is also open to visitors.

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9. Major Bibliographical References Continued page 1

Everard M. Upjohn, Richard Upjohn, Architect and Churchman (New York, 1939),  
93, 94, 124, 125, 127, 128, 202.

Andrew Jackson Downing, The Architecture of Country Homes (New York, 1866),  
317-321

Rhode Island, A Guide to the Smallest State (American Guide Series) (Boston,  
1937), 238.

Alan Gowans, Images of American Living (Philadelphia & New York, 1964), 320,  
321.